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ABSTRACT

This document outlines 44 strategies for meeting the educational needs of urban areas by the year 2000. The strategies are based on six goals for urban education adapted from the national education goals issued by President George Bush and the National Governors' Association. The strategies were proposed by representatives from more than 70 national foundations, associations, and businesses to serve as potential building blocks to a multi-year plan of action. Local alliance-building and collective community action are emphasized throughout. The strategies are related to the following goals: (1) schools and communities will demonstrate high expectations for all learners so that urban students will attain a level of achievement that will allow them to successfully compete with students nationally and internationally; (2) all urban children will start school ready to learn; (3) urban schools will increase their graduation rates so they are at least comparable to the national average; (4) urban school graduates will be fully prepared to enter and successfully complete higher education, experience successful employment, and exercise their responsibilities as citizens; (5) urban schools will be adequately staffed with qualified teachers who are culturally and racially sensitive and who reflect the racial characteristics of their students; and (6) urban schools will be free of drugs and alcohol, students will be well-nourished and healthy, and schools will be well-maintained and safe. (FMW)

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The Council of Great City Schools

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Strategies for Success

Achieving the National Urban Education Goals

DRAFT

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Proceedings from Meetings with Representatives from 70 National Education, Business and Philanthropic Organizations

November 1990

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INTRODUCTION

The Council of Great City Schools, a longstanding voice on behalf of urban education, is reaching well beyond its 45-member school districts to all national education organizations, the corporate community and the philanthropic world to place the critical urban education issues squarely in the public awareness and to commit themselves to finding successful solutions to these problems.

Building upon the national education goals for the year 2000, the Council has adopted six related goals which address the particular educational needs of urban areas. The Council appointed a National Urban Education Task Force, comprised of board of education members and superintendents from across the country, to mobilize a broad base of support for the goals and for the development of an action agenda to meet the goals.

To launch these efforts, the Council's task force brought together key representatives from more than seventy organizations (foundations, associations, and businesses) in two work sessions to carefully consider the goals, to postulate strategies for achieving these aims and to secure the organizations' assistance in working collaboratively toward the accomplishment of these ambitious, but critical, national objectives.

The work sessions, held in August and September of this year, produced a spirited exchange of viewpoints, fostered a heightened awareness of the critical issues facing urban schools and most importantly, identified much common ground on which to build alliances and collective action.

This document is the result of these meetings. It offers a sampling of the strategies proposed as potential building blocks to a multi-year plan of action on behalf of urban education. This is by no means an exhaustive list; these ideas are intended to serve as the basis for further

discussion, elaboration and refinement. The strategies presented here will be used to identify programs and places where progress is evident or emerging. In short, it is a beginning to what will be an arduous path, requiring an unprecedented level of work and commitment from an extraordinary range of public and private entities.

The Council members, its task force, as well as the representatives from the many participating organizations fully recognize that the national urban education goals are tremedous challenges. Undaunted by the magnitude of the task, these individuals also firmly believe that the nation cannot afford to merely "write off" the educational needs of urban children simply because those needs at times appear insurmountable. They understand -- and intend to help others understand -- that to concede defeat, or defer, or even to momentarily hesitate, in the quest to equip **all** children with the possibilities and power that only education can offer will have grave ramifications which will resound far beyond the cities' limits.

BACKGROUND

The rationale for developing a set of national urban education goals (adapted from the six national education goals issued by President Bush and the National Governors' Association) was **not** to further bemoan a long list of education's shortcomings. The serious problems that today plague America's schools, and, in particular, threaten to cripple inner city youth and urban communities, are well documented and widely lamented.

Instead, the Council of Great City Schools' membership carefully constructed these broad and admittedly formidable goals to serve as a rallying point and an impetus for concerted, creative action for improvement. Indeed, the superintendents and board of education members who lead the nation's urban school districts are only too aware of the many obstacles and challenges confronting today's urban students.

We Know the Problems

The litany of ailments is familiar: low student achievement; illiteracy; dropouts; homelessness; discipline problems; teen pregnancy; substance abuse; and crime fester in the inner cities. Deteriorating school buildings, lack of adequate teaching materials, dwindling financial resources, and shortages of qualified and committed teachers, principals, and support staff further complicate the unstable conditions of urban schools and communities. Furthermore, these burdens are borne in disproportionate numbers by the children of African-American and other minority populations that live in the poverty stricken, inner cores of America's major cities. Within the Council of Great City Schools membership, 45 of the largest urban school districts, more than 75 percent of the total school enrollments were minority children.

These problems, while alarming to all, have not been exaggerated. They are substantiated by research and testimony of those at the core of the struggle as well as objective observers. In recent years, urban schools

and at-risk children have been the focus of a number of studies, reports, and fact-finding commissions. A host of government agencies, research institutions, and professional organizations have generated reams of literature on issues related to urban education.

And We Know Many Answers

Not only do educators in the throes of these challenges have a daily, firsthand knowledge of what the problems are, they willingly admit that enough is already known about how children learn, what makes for exemplary teaching, and what constitutes the optimal environment for learning to effectively address many of education's problems. Those deeply concerned about urban education are often left to wonder: "If we know what the problems are and have identified what kinds of remedies are needed, then why can we not realize a greater rate of progress?"

A partial answer to this question has been described in a recent Rand Corporation publication, **The Federal Role in Education: A Strategy for the 1990's.** Urban schools, the study concludes, are very isolated from the supportive forces they need to effectively address the complex issues they now face:

> "Schools have too many liabilities to be attractive to ambitious politicians, cost too much to be popular with business and taxpayer groups, involve too low-status a group of professionals to attract the attention of the academic community and provide services that are too low quality to retain the middle class patronage. The result is that central-city schools are isolated from the mainstream of civic, political and economic life. Left to their own resources, they will become less well-funded, more controversial, lower quality and more segregated by race and income."

Today's urban school leaders realize that school districts alone can not single-handedly tackle the urban education agenda; they are seeking the support and assistance from the wider community and from the

nation. That is, for instance, the basis for reaching out to a wide variety of national concerns to not only support the national urban education goals, but also to join in the strategy, planning and action sessions necessary to prompt a widespread commitment to achieving those goals.

Clearly, however, in order to marshall the kinds of social, legislative, governmental and corporate forces needed to move steadily toward the achievement of these goals, there must be a clear, common vision of what is at stake if we continue to fail the children of our cities.

What is at Stake?

America's schools have traditionally been at the heart of the communities they serve. A fundamental institution in our nation's history, public schools have been one of the few places where rich meet poor, the advantaged mingle with disadvantaged, and where, ideally, political, religious, and ethnic boundaries would not exist.

As a nation, Americans have entrusted their most precious resource -- children -- to the public schools. Many children, in fact, spend more time in classrooms with school staff than at home with their parents. In many drug-worn city neighborhoods, school has become the best available haven of safety and security for children. In essence, the nation literally invested its future in this institution.

Given this backdrop, if the country gives up on the "grand experiment" of public education, its economic, social, and political well-being will be placed in jeopardy.

The economic consequences of an uneducated and unskilled youth are profound. Dependency rates of elderly to youth have and will continue to shift. To put this shift in perspective, in the 1950's there were 17 people working for each retiree; in the 1990's there will be three. To

remain economically strong in today's highly competitive global market, American businesses must be able to count on a stable workforce made up of individuals who are committed to working "smarter." Not only will the workplace demand basic literacy and computing skills, it will also require higher order thinking abilities for retrieving, organizing, analyzing, summarizing, synthesizing, and applying vast amounts of readily accessible data.

An unskilled and uneducated workforce threatens America's economic stature and power on the world front and our nation's businesses at home. Already, employee literacy and training programs are costing corporations millions of dollars each year. American businesses are having to teach basic skills that employees failed to learn in school. The costs to the federal, state, and local governments are equally high. In many cities, tax bases are shrinking while the number of unemployed and unskilled individuals who depend on government support for survival is swelling.

Specifically at risk are thousands of urban youth who, with few or minimal skills, have dropped out of school. A 1985-86 U.S. Department of Labor study reports that of the 562,000 dropouts, over 300,000 were unemployed. These individuals are unlikely to be able to support themselves or their families as adults. The public will pay the costs for their shelter, clothing, food, health care, and perhaps even incarceration and rehabilitation, as statistics cited in the recently released demographic study, **The Same Client**, indicate that 82 percent of America's prisoners are high school dropouts. Indeed, already governments and the private sector are stretching to support the unskilled, uneducated, and unemployed.

Another demographic shift sociologists point to is the shrinking middle income bracket. Since 1940, approximately 80 percent of our

population has fallen into this bracket. Projections beyond 1990 suggest that the gap between rich and poor will widen and the middle class will decrease by some 20 percent or more. Low income, minority families will be adversely affected as competition for government support increases and the solid middle income tax base decreases.

Coupled with the social and economic costs of neglecting to educate urban and minority youth are the potential consequences for the basic political foundations of democracy. An educated and literate citizenry is the cornerstone of the democratic form of government and national security. For democracy to work, men and women must be able to read, listen, and understand the complex issues that affect them and their families. On the world front, the credibility of democracy is at stake as other nations look to this nation for better living conditions and the promise of equality and freedom.

Clearly, the nation can not afford to survey the urban landscape with its difficult terrain and conclude that conquering these troubles is a "lost cause." The consequences of such a decision are too serious and will adversely effect even those furthest from the cities' increasing notoriety for bright lights and diminished lives.

The alternative to this bleak forecast, then, must be to act -- and act swiftly. The year 2000 looms large and near.

For the global reasons noted here and for the millions of individual "reasons" who attend our schools, the Council of Great City Schools has set forth six very imposing goals and is calling upon all segments of our nation to join in the sustained effort which can transform those goals into accomplishments.

National Urban Education Goals

Goal 1: By the year 2000, schools and communities will demonstrate high expectations for all learners so that urban students will attain a level of achievement that will allow them to successfully compete with students nationally and internationally in our global community.

Goal 2: By the year 2000, all urban children will start school ready to learn.

Goal 3: By the year 2000, urban schools will increase their graduation rates so they are at least comparable to the national average.

Goal 4: By the year 2000, urban school graduates will be fully prepared to enter and successfully complete higher education, experience successful employment and exercise their responsibilities as citizens.

Goal 5: By the year 2000, urban schools will be adequately staffed with qualified teachers who are culturally and racially sensitive and who reflect the racial characteristics of their students.

Goal 6: By the year 2000, urban schools will be free of drugs and alcohol, students will be well nourished and healthy, and schools will be well-maintained and safe.

GOAL 1

By the year 2000, schools and communities will demonstrate high expectations for all learners so that urban students will attain a level of achievement that will allow them to successfully compete with students nationally and internationally in our global community.

Objectives:

- To close the gap in academic achievement between urban and suburban schools.
- To continue to close gaps in academic achievement among urban students of all racial, ethnic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- To improve the distribution of student test scores across all four quartiles.
- To increase the numbers of students who take the SAT or ACT and to boost the average system-wide scores annually.
- To demonstrate achievement scores that equal or exceed norms on nationally standardized tests.
- To increase the enrollment of urban students in advanced courses in math and science and other preparatory courses.
- To increase enrollment of urban students in core curriculum subjects.

Strategy:

1.1 Establish a public/private steering committee in each local urban school district with responsibility for increasing community involvement as school volunteers, role models, and as arbiters of new standards for student achievement and excellence. Community members should include parents, family members, religious and community organization leaders, politicians, business persons, those without children in schools, etc.

Rationale:

A common theme echoing throughout most of the Council's work sessions with national organization leaders, and reflected in many current educational studies and policy papers, is the need for local communities to develop a greater stake in the education of our urban youth. Whether these arguments are based on altruistic or future-survival themes, the reality remains that urban school districts need additional assistance with resolving urban issues that negatively impact on the education of urban youth. Many organizations, individuals, businesses and school districts have already begun massive volunteer efforts in recognition of the potential significance of increasing community "ownership" in the educational process. This strategy recognizes the importance of a coordinated effort to address the complex issues facing urban schools.

Strategy:

1.2 Develop staff development programs for teachers and other school staff which: (a) emphasize multi-cultural, gender, and disability bias-free curricula; (b) provide preparation for teaching in an urban environment; and (c) improve the quality of mathematics and science instruction.

Rationale:

This strategy acknowledges the importance of the curricula itself and the role of the teacher in the delivery of instruction and the achievement of urban students. The ethnic and cultural diversity of urban students must be acknowledged not only in a bias-free curricula but also in the recognition by teachers and school staff of the differences in learning styles among individuals within and among various cultures. Professional staff must be provided the necessary training and support to re-tool their teaching styles for today's urban learner regardless of their cultural and educational backgrounds. However, this multi-cultural emphasis in curriculum and instructional delivery must be carefully integrated with current teaching practices so as to not de-emphasize or replace the core curriculum areas. Indeed, new approaches to mathematics and science instruction and increasing teacher competencies within these areas are an important focus of this strategy.

Strategy:

1.3 Develop public policy and support which promote new resources (both human and financial) for local school programs and disproportionate funding for urban school districts.

Rationale:

This strategy is based upon a recognition that proposed attempts to improve the quality of instruction and increase achievement of urban students cannot occur without local, state, and federal policy decisions which will provide more resources. One potential application of this strategy on the federal level is to increase the level of Chapter 1 funding so that every student who is eligible for Chapter 1 services receives adequate support. Other non-financial applications of this strategy include revised teacher certification policies to allow retirees and other persons to enter the teaching profession; tax and other economic incentives for businesses who "adopt" local school districts; financial aid for promising urban students, etc.

Strategy:

1.4 Establish a network of "models that work" and develop a system of awards and sanctions which recognize effective schools. Organize national, state, and local clearinghouses to disseminate information and prevent redundancy.

Rationale:

Perhaps the biggest problem in addressing urban education issues is not the lack of good ideas and effective programs, but rather the lack of communication among school districts, national, state and local organizations, foundations, etc. Many of those organizational leaders attending the Council's work sessions commented on the lack of any organized forum for sharing their "successes" and finding out what others are doing. The development of a national clearinghouse with guidelines for supporting state and local versions should be one of the initial undertakings of the National Urban Education Task Force.

Strategies:

1.5 Develop local and state goals that establish appropriate assessment procedures which are ethnic and gender bias-free.

1.6 Provide staff development for teachers and workshops and materials for parents which improve student test-taking skills and which focus on the interpretation and diagnostic use of standardized test scores.

Rationale:

One unfortunate outcome of the educational reform activities of the past decade has been the over-reliance on standardized test scores as an indicator of student success. This approach has had a ripple effect all the way down to the classroom level where teachers must sometimes choose between offering instruction for higher-level thinking skills and providing basic skills instruction in tested areas. Taken to the extreme, some schools and teachers have begun "teaching to the test" in order to improve their testing profiles.

Many studies have indicated that urban students in general and minority students in particular do not do as well on standardized tests as their suburban counterparts. The debate continues as to whether this is due to cultural biases which are inherent in the test instruments themselves or whether it is attributable to the quality of instruction. Regardless of either factor, the fact remains that teachers and parents need assistance with preparing students for the testing process and interpreting test results once the tests have been administered.

Oftentimes, standardized tests are administered at the close of the school year and the results are sent home with little or no attention from either the school or the parents. One immediate solution to this problem is to administer the tests at the start of the school year so that teachers can use the information for diagnostic and instructional planning.

Strategy:

1.7 Promote alternative assessment methods to standardized tests which measure student performance and de-emphasize norm-referenced tests.

Rationale:

Because of the controversy surrounding the bias factor in standardized tests and the negative instructional impact discussed previously, an important strategy in this area is the exploration of alternative assessment strategies for urban students. With the increasingly multimedia instructional environment and the potential for computer-based assessment as part of automated instructional management systems for teachers and schools, multiple-choice standardized tests are too one-dimensional to be the primary indicators of student performance. As we move toward the next century, we must explore the use of technology as a new resource for bias-free and effective assessment of student mastery of designated competencies and skills.

Strategy:

1.8 Review and consider structural changes to retention policies, tracking and ability grouping in order to promote higher academic standards for all students.

Rationale:

During the past five years, every major education study and policy paper related to "the crisis in public education" includes a discussion of the negative effects of tracking and ability grouping on minority students. One issue is the distinction between "access" and "equity" and the lack of support resources for students who "are free to sign up for any courses they choose" but who lack the preparation and skills to take more difficult academic courses. When translated to the urban school environment, this problem results in entire schools without the full range of high-level courses for even the most advanced students. Unfortunately, for many urban youth the distinction between "access" and "equity" is a moot point. The phasing out of the "general" curriculum and replacement with a set of core competencies which emphasize math, science, and other preparatory courses will greatly enhance the achievement levels of urban school students.

Strategy:

1.9 Promote public policies and attitudes which focus on student achievement and develop a "joy in learning."

Rationale:

Given the complex and often threatening social issues of today, a preponderance of adult messages to youth are admonishing or critical. "Don't do this" and "Don't do that" messages overshadow more positive communications which convey adults' pride, support and faith in children and their abilities. Adults must "celebrate" and reward student achievement (through policies, programs and widespread public communications) if children are to have confidence in their abilities and value scholastic success.

Furthermore, urban students live and function in an environment in which they are bombarded with music, video, colorful graphics, etc. They grow up with fast-action video games, glitzy television shows, entertaining news broadcasts, and even colorful newspapers. When they enter the school building, they are asked to sit quietly and complete faded dittoes, work with outdated textbooks, and copy assignments from the blackboard when no textbooks are available. It is no small wonder that many students do not experience the joy in learning. The educational technology already exists which is capable of recapturing the "spark" within many of our urban students. However, even though the cost of this technology is decreasing, many school districts do not have adequate resources to bring the capability to the classrooms where it is so desperately needed. It is important for local school districts to work with government leaders at all levels and local business and community leaders to develop long-term policies and plans for making multimedia instructional delivery systems available to urban students.

GOAL 2

By the year 2000, all urban children will start school ready to learn.

Objectives:

- To provide access for needy urban children aged 3-5 to a full-day, full year development program, offering a full range of health, nutrition, diagnostic, developmental, educational, social, language, and other services.
- To ensure that urban pre-K programs will be adequately staffed with qualified personnel and necessary equipment.
- To make available comprehensive child care services to the children of students, and before and after school care for those in need.
- To provide urban parents with the opportunity to receive training in parenting skills at school sites.
- To coordinate affordable preschool services throughout the community to ensure maximum benefits.

Strategy:

2.1 Define the scope of required educational services to range from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade in all urban school districts.

Rationale:

Policies or legislation that requires mandatory school attendance to at least the kindergarten level needs to be developed. Programs to serve 3- and 4-year olds would be preferable, with supplemental programs for day care provided by independent agencies and organizations. In a number of school districts the mandatory age for school attendance starts beyond the early childhood education years. As a result, there are wide variances in the number and types of programs offered. Several school districts currently have no programs for three- to five-year-old children.

Schools should be prepared to deal with students at their present level of development, socially and academically. Schools systems should develop curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and has a proper fit with the students it is intended to serve. The educational institution must recognize the need for internal change in order to be able to provide services that are needed and wanted by the parents and children. There may also be a need to provide a range of services based on the needs of the children. One program fit all may not be an effective approach. School systems will have to address the issues of equal service delivery versus equitable service delivery.

The investment in early childhood education as a preventive strategy offsets social costs that must be spent for adults in later years. It is an effective long-term cost savings measure and a hedge against the requirement for future expenditures that serve little benefit for the progress of the society. School systems and associated policy makers should use the available research in their deliberations to establish and fund early childhood programs. It is now substantially documented that early childhood programs is a long-term investment. The children who experience these programs have many of the positive characteristics that are stated in school systems' goals, and reject many of the tendencies that would have a detrimental effect on them specifically and on society in general.

Strategy:

2.2 Develop closer ties between pre-kindergarten and day care programs.

Rationale:

There are a number of compelling reasons to support this strategy. The first is related to changes in the general society, demography, and economy. There is an increasing number of children in the age range. Along with the increasing number of children, there are many more in poverty, exacerbated by the depth and degree of the poverty.

The number of women with children in the work force is increasing at a steady and rapid rate. Regardless of the family structure (one or two parent families), more women are working and need child care. This factor is complicated and made more pronounced by the large number of single parent families.

The number of young children is increasing and it is estimated that this trend will continue well into the 1990s. It is also estimated that a very small proportion of the children are receiving these needed services. Participants in the strategy setting meetings documented that "today's early childhood programs – day care homes, day care centers, and nursery schools – serve approximately 30 percent of the nation's 16.1 million children under the age 5. Nursery schools, which include most Head Start and public school programs, serve only 6 percent of these children."

Another factor for developing closer ties between pre-kindergarten and day care programs relates to the issue of quality programs. There are vast difference in the types of services available and the qualifications for the service providers. Pre-kindergarten and day care programs should not be considered warehousing activities. There is a sizable body of knowledge, well grounded in research, that addresses the development needs of children in this age range. The programs should be developmentally appropriate and the staffs fully qualified.

There are two elements that must be considered in determining quality programs. First, the programs must be founded in research and

developed specifically for the children in the age range. Secondly, parents and school/day care personnel must understand and be able to apply these educational tenets to the individual child. Parents must play a critical role in supporting the child at home. School administrators also will need a greater understanding of early childhood education in order to fully support the program.

Consideration should be given to sharing space for both pre-kindergarten and day care activities, as long as the activities are conducted at different times during the day.

Strategy:

2.3 Define the total scope of services required for children and families, and designate schools as centers for the delivery of child and family services.

Rationale:

Schools can not tackle the readiness issue alone; linkages with community-based agencies, other schools, hospitals, health care providers and the like must be forged. An inventories of capacities and existing services will need to be conducted to determine the severity and nature of gaps in services and to identify problem areas. Resource inventories describe the services available to a target population and reveal gaps in services. A resource inventory may point to underutilized services and may help agencies and organizations to avoid duplication. Such inventories also will help determine the types of services that are available. Evaluations regarding the quality of existing services also will be needed.

The agencies and organizations in each city that provide services to the target population must be identified. The types of services available, the number of persons in the target group, the quality of services provided, and the percent of capacity at which the organizations and agencies are operating should then be determined. Once the levels of service are known the city, school district and other service providers will be in a position to plan for the delivery of comprehensive services that are well coordinated.

Federal programs and services should be included in the inventory. As an example, if there was a need for increased nutritional services, the local agencies and states could lobby for an expansion of the Federal Nutrition Programs to cover children in all types of programs and to increase the number of meals available. Increasing the number of children served then might be accomplished by reducing or making the eligibility requirements more flexible.

The "age frame" for this goal should be challenged, with consideration being given to starting with prenatal concerns and not the age of the

student. There are issues of health and nutrition in parenting that impact on children long before they reach school age. Programs for children should start at birth with strong outreach efforts for parents.

Strategies:

2.4 Develop fully qualified teachers from the pool of people who are presently working with young children or are high school students and indicate an interest in becoming pre-kindergarten teachers.

2.5 Create "interest" groups in high schools such as the future teachers of America, with a sub-category for students interested in teaching pre-kindergarten.

2.6 Develop a pool of teacher candidates from day care workers and employees from other social service institutions who are interested in the development of young children. Teacher's aides and paraprofessionals would also be likely candidates to become teachers.

Rationale:

There are a large number of people who enjoy working with young children and are presently working in low paying childcare-related jobs. Within this group, there are a pool of workers who would be willing and suitable candidates to become pre-kindergarten teachers, given the opportunity. There are teacher's aides and paraprofessionals already in school districts who would take advantage of the opportunity to work toward becoming a pre-kindergarten teacher.

There are a variety of different ways a school district could support there potential candidates. Candidates could be given the opportunity to attend school full time with obligations to provide their services for a given amount of time. Candidates could be awarded scholarships or some form or grant in aid. Agreements with requirements for working a specified number of years could be a condition for receiving aid. Another option could be part time school and part time work. As the candidate was working toward a degree they would also work in a pre-kindergarten setting with a full qualified teacher.

On a longer term basis, high school students could be introduced to the teaching profession through clubs and extra-curricular activities. These

associations would lead to some form of financial assistance for those students who selected early childhood education as a profession. There could be part time work for these students in the summers and at vacation time.

Strategy:

2.7 Establish high schools as comprehensive child care centers, providing a wide range of services from different organizations and agencies. The range of services would cover the student-parent and their children, as well as educational, social, nutritional, and health care.

Rationale:

The impact of services being delivered in many different locations and under different rules and regulations is felt by the clients. It often serves as a disincentive for full use of the services. There are the time and practicality issues to be considered. Based on the amount of time available to the student/parent, the travel distance between home school and other services, the number of services they require, and their financial capability, it may be impractical for students to avail themselves of all the necessary services. By bringing the services together, a greater degree of efficiency is obtained for the service providers as well as the clients.

There is also the benefit of shared or more economical use of resources. Rather than paying the cost of facilities for each service, for example, the schools would contribute space, relieving the other agencies from those cost. The savings could then be redirected toward the agency's primary services.

There is the possibility of using portable buildings on school sites for before and after school programs. If there is not enough space in the school building or if a community does not want the service provided inside the school, the use of portable buildings may be an acceptable alternative. Many school districts have portable facilities available.

Currently, most parent training programs are aimed at mothers because they are more often the full-time custodian of their children. However, where the opportunities exist, parenting programs should be provided for both mothers and fathers. One approach might be to focus initial parental training on reconciling and clarifying the relationship between the mother and father. Then, appropriate training could be provided for the parents in relationship to their children. One of the common issues for teen parents is that they do not have a clear understanding of the roles

and responsibilities of the mother and father and their obligations to their children.

Establishment of child or family center for parental training could be modeled after the university laboratory school. The best that is known about parenting could be brought into practice in these facilities. Both parents could be involved, with a emphasis on the broad family issues as well as on the development of parenting skills.

Strategy:

2.8 Identify one community organization in each city to work with the school district to offer parenting courses and recruit parents into training.

Rationale:

For a number of reasons there is a need to provide parenting skill training. There is no doubt that parents want the best for their children and want them to be successful in school. However, based on their economic conditions and life experiences, they may not have the skills to adequately prepare their children for school and help develop their social skills.

Parental training should begin in the pre and postnatal stages to have a major impact on the child and parental development. The "ready to learn" goal should be interpreted to begin at birth and continue throughout life. There are many habits and traits that children easily acquire during the early stages of life. To help promote positive child rearing in a caring environment, the parents must be ready and able by the time the child is born. Training should not be limited to the mother alone. Whenever it is possible, the father should be included.

A critical facet in parental training is developing a positive transition between home and school. Many of the at-risk characteristics are present in pre-kindergarten age children. One of the contributing factors is the parent's attitude toward school and communicating those feelings to the child.

Further, at the pre-kindergarten age, the child is often dependent on the parent to get to and from school. If the parent places a low priority on school attendance it is likely that the child will develop a similar attitude toward school. These patterns of behavior and attitudes can be changed through parent training, as Head Start and similar programs have demonstrated.

Concerted media and awareness campaigns may be necessary to create the necessary interest in opportunities for parent training. Schools have a

ready audience in the student/parent group and ca serve as a vehicle for disseminating information about parent training courses or assistance. Many of the social service agencies also have ready access to people who would qualify and benefit from such programs.

GOAL 3

By the year 2000, urban schools will increase their graduation rates so they are at least comparable to the national average.

Objectives:

- To reduce the gap in graduation rates between urban and non-urban youth, among students of various racial disability, language and ethnic backgrounds, and among students of varying economic circumstance.
- To reduce urban dropouts by 50% by the year 2000, and by another 50% by 2010.
- To increase urban four-year graduation rates annually between 1991 and 2000.
- To increase daily urban student attendance rates to 95% for elementary schools and 90% for secondary schools.
- To increase the number of urban dropouts who return to school.
- To reduce urban school rates of in-grade retention by 10% annually.

Strategy:

3.1 Identify students in urban settings who are at "high-risk" of dropping out of school at as early an age as possible.

Factors that place a student at high-risk for dropping out of school include low academic achievement, low attendance rates, disciplinary problems, grade retention, low socioeconomic status, and enrollment at schools that serve large numbers of economically disadvantaged students. Students who have been held back a grade, who are in remedial or special education classes, and/or who are eligible for Chapter 1 have a higher risk of candidates for dropping out of school. By monitoring these identifying factors in urban school systems, early recognition of such "high-risk" students will enable schools, parents and communities to take appropriate preventive action.

Rationale:

By the time a student reaches the third grade, many of the factors that place him or her at risk for dropping out of school in later years are evident. Because the child is young, however, there is still time to curb the self-limiting expectations and poor academic grounding that likely would prevent these students from completing school. Study habits, self-perception, and academic confidence can be improved with appropriate attention to high-risk students.

Identifying high-risk students during the elementary years will allow early intervention strategists to move ahead with the task of addressing specific needs and problem areas that are affecting the development of these children. Students' problems and deficiencies generally are small in the earliest grades, and they will benefit from programs that are preventive in nature. Intervention can check the progress of each child and ensure that measures are taken to maintain the child's progress. And, the cost of preventing a problem from developing is far less expensive than the cost of correcting obstacles that are deeply rooted or by providing remedial help.

Enough early intervention programs have been proven successful to warrant their use in creating programs for lower-grade students who may

be at high risk for leaving school early. Consequently, these students must be identified by the earliest grade possible. The Head Start program, which is designed for economically disadvantaged pre-schoolers, is one example of how early targeting can produce long-term effects. Children who participated in the Head Start program do better academically than do children of similar backgrounds who did not participate. While the levels of academic preparedness tend to decline each year until there is little difference among children who attended and who did not attend, longitudinal studies have shown that Head Start children are more likely to persist with their education and to receive a high school diploma.

Strategy:

3.2 Initiate collaborative efforts between schools, parents, community agencies, businesses, and institutions of higher education aimed specifically at dropout prevention.

Schools can begin by opening their doors to parents and other members of the community. Occasions can be light and simple, such as a talent show, neighborhood-school fair, fleamarket, etc. Parents who dislike visiting schools or who might be intimidated by teachers and administrators can become familiar with their child's school environment and meet teachers on a casual, friendly basis. Parents who work during the day might appreciate opportunities to relax with children at evening or weekend events.

Schools also can involve community agencies, businesses and post-secondary institutions by inviting them to host workshops for both students and parents. Topics such as how to develop good study habits; how to get into college; skills and knowledge needed in business; parenting skills; local social service resources; etc. are all topics that can provide valuable information to those who need it.

All members of the community can become involved in working with students who are at risk of dropping out of school. Volunteers are needed for tutoring, mentoring and providing other forms of support to students. By recruiting parents, community leaders, businesses, and others to form a coalition of support for high-risk students, schools can better meet the needs of such students.

Rationale:

Keeping students in school is everyone's responsibility. For those who are at high risk of dropping out, many forces may be in play simultaneously. Socio-economic difficulties, dysfunctional families, inadequate academic preparation, poor social skills and other factors may be interfering with a student's desire to remain in school. Dropout prevention efforts must focus on all aspects of child development. Because schools do not have the resources to deal effectively with all the

problems a student may be facing, a coalition of concerned and committed citizens will provide assistance and/or services where schools cannot. For younger students, the coalition might develop, for example, homework centers located in low-income housing neighborhoods. For older students, such a coalition might help establish a service network so students with financial, housing, or child care needs might readily receive the services that will enable them to stay in school.

Strategy:

3.3 Establish partnerships with parents to encourage their active involvement with the school.

There are innumerable ways which schools currently use to boost levels of parent involvement; these have met with widely varying levels of success. Unfortunately, in some urban settings, the more traditional methods of engaging parents in the work of their children's schools are reaching only a very limited number of parents. While these more conventional activities should not be abandoned, schools must also look to devising alternative means of securing involvement, such as scheduling parent-teacher conferences after regular work hours, on weekends and on "neutral turf" to diminish parental reluctance to come to the school building. Some school districts have had significant parent response by instituting systematic telephone communications (e.g., establishing a "parent hot line" manned at certain hours by administrators, counselors and teachers. Other districts are experimenting with various outreach concepts, particularly to establish working contacts with non-English speaking parents (e.g., case workers who make home visits).

Rationale:

There is no question that parents play a critical role in motivating their children to work hard in school and to complete their educations. Students who succeed in school share many characteristics -- regardless of racial, cultural or socio-economic backgrounds. One common characteristic is that these students have one or both parents who monitor their academic accomplishments. Such children are expected to complete homework assignments daily, to work with siblings on school work if necessary, to limit their television viewing hours, to attend to assigned chores around the home, and to socialize only with friends approved by the parents.

Parents, teachers and administrators who work together will be better able to understand the nature of a student's problems in school and at home. Each will be able to support the efforts of the others and work

toward helping the student to succeed in all of life's arenas. By encouraging parents to play a significant role in the educational process, schools will benefit from parents' ability to use family resources in addressing the problems of high-risk students. The investment in finding effective ways to actively engage parents in their children's education may be one area in which schools can reap the greatest returns in student progress.

Strategy:

3.4: Institute strong school attendance programs that involves students, parents, teachers, counselors and administrators working together to monitor daily attendance and to communicate with absent or tardy students.

Principals and staff can create a committee that is responsible for examining daily attendance records of students. Because committee members include a variety of "representatives," students who are frequently absent from school could be contacted by each of the different groups. For example, student committee members might telephone truant students and urge them to return to school. Parent members might meet with high-risk students at school or other acceptable meeting places to provide on-going contact with an adult who is not a part of the school staff. Teachers, principals, counselors and other school personnel might arrange to visit the student and/or the student's parent/s in order to discuss why students are not attending class regularly and to refer students and/or families to social service agencies when necessary.

Rationale:

Monitoring the attendance records of students, especially high-risk students, can reveal patterns of absenteeism that may be a signal for a developing or existing problem that a student may be having with school work, personal matters, peers, family, etc. Because such a student would be contacted by members of the school-based committee, i.e., other students, parents, teachers and counselors, the committee will be better able to determine the reason behind absenteeism. Once a reason has been identified, the student can be counseled and referred to a service or program that addresses his or her needs.

Improving attendance can affect the climate of the school and classroom. Schools with fewer truants are able to devote more resources to the smooth running of the school. Low absenteeism can mean fewer classroom disruptions and an environment that is conducive to learning. Students who attend classes regularly are more likely to keep up with course content and to become involved in some aspect of school, whether it is homework, a class project or extra-curricular activity.

GOAL 3

Students who are absent from school on a regular basis often are dissatisfied with their own academic performance and relationships with teachers and other students. Curbing absenteeism, along with other dropout prevention programs, can help a student to overcome academic difficulties. Teachers and other adults who become involved with truant students can make them feel cared for and more a part of the school. With such assistance, school can become both appealing and relevant to truant students.

Strategy:

3.5 Develop and implement alternative programming for students who have dropped out of school.

Outreach programs can be an effective means for recruiting high school dropouts and urging them to return to school. Because these individuals are already out on their own and beyond the reach of school officials, members of the community and non-school organizations must participate in the recruitment efforts. For example, employed dropouts are likely to be working in jobs that require few skills and that pay low wages, such as fast food restaurants. Employers can post information describing alternative programs that allow dropouts to receive high school diplomas while they continue to work. Public service announcements, community events, and even door-to-door visits or personal telephone calls are other ways to make contact with dropouts to let them know that opportunities are available to them.

Aside from contacting high school dropouts, schools must be prepared with academic programs that present an alternative to what the student left behind. Finding out why students dropped out of school is a critical step in developing successful alternative programs.

Rationale:

Students leave school for a variety of reasons. Often it is because they have not done well academically. After repeated failures and generally lagging behind their classmates in subject knowledge, these high-risk students become discouraged, angry or impatient to have a few successes in life. They may know few adult role models who themselves have finished high school or who have advanced degrees and professional careers. At times, the glamour of urban street life becomes far more appealing than sitting bored in the back of a classroom. Other students leave school early because their families need them to contribute to the household income or because their home lives are too unstable to support any educational goals they might have. Teen-age pregnancy is another reason many students leave school early.

Schools must provide alternative ways for high-risk students to receive an education. Vocational education, cooperative education, and night

school are several traditional ways to approach educational alternatives. Like other educational strategies, these have had a "mixed bag" of results. Educators need to more systematically identify the programs which have met with significant success, examine how and why they have been effective, and find ways to replicate the best of these efforts.

Other, less traditional approaches also exist and need to be closely evaluated for use in a variety of settings. For example, the "street academy" model may still hold potential for re-attracting students. These alternative schools recruited teachers who themselves might have been dropouts or who might have experienced academic difficulties at one time. These teachers served as seasoned, real-life role models who learned the value of an education the hard way. As teachers, they were committed, compassionate and tough in the classroom. Because their own experiences were similar to that of many of their students, the rapport that developed between teachers and students created a new bond that had been previously missing for high-risk students in regular schools.

Strategy:

3.6 Establish a preventive program that provides intensive services to students who are at high risk of failing a grade.

Preventive strategies can be implemented at all grade levels, but the earlier students are exposed to services the more likely they will be to succeed. The key to this strategy is that services are intensive. The academic progress of high-risk students must be monitored more often than that of students in the general school population. One or more reviews per quarter is recommended. When students' areas of difficulty are clarified, they can meet with tutors on a one-to-one basis. Students with problems that are not necessarily school related must be provided with appropriate counseling in order to deal effectively with the problem.

Rationale:

Retaining students a grade has been an often used method of dealing with students who are at high risk of dropping out of school. It is also a method that has been proven to be ineffective in serving this purpose. Students who drop out of school generally feel alienated by the school environment and have not done well academically. While holding back a student may temporarily help raise school-wide achievement scores, it does little in the long run for the individual student. Rather than improving the likelihood that the student will remain in school until he or she graduates, in-grade retention tends to discourage students who already view themselves as academic failures and to make them more likely to leave school early.

Rather than assigning high-risk students to special education classes or removing them from regular classrooms during certain periods for assistance, students are more likely to benefit from working with tutors either during regular class sessions or before or after school. This way, students can receive assistance that is immediately relevant to their regular class work. Tutors have the opportunity to work directly with teachers to find out specific needs of the student, and are able to augment the teacher's weekly lesson plan with additional exercises for the student.

By providing high-risk students with intensive services that are designed to meet a variety of needs, schools will be able to prevent

students from reaching the point where they fail courses at their current grade level. Prevention efforts are easier to conduct and cheaper in the long run. Learning deficiencies will not be compounded year after year and students will not have to endure low levels of self-esteem or intellectual confidence.

GOAL 4

By the year 2000, urban school graduates will be fully prepared to enter and successfully complete higher education, experience successful employment, and exercise their responsibilities as citizens.

Objectives:

- To increase the numbers of urban school graduates who enroll in four-year college or university degree programs.
- To upgrade and improve the quality of urban vocational education and job training programs.
- To increase substantially the number of eligible urban school students registered to vote.
- To increase opportunities for urban school students to participate in community service programs and activities in the schools and the community.
- To increase the ability of urban school graduates to reason, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions.

Strategy:

4.1 Establish partnerships between urban middle schools, high schools and local universities.

Universities that are linked with urban schools can arrange a variety of activities for students, such as providing academic counseling and assistance, familiarizing students with college application procedures and entrance requirements, establishing a network for students and professional role models, and showing students the value of post-secondary education. As students participate in university-related activities, they can be motivated to complete high school, encouraged to select college preparation courses during high school, urged to develop solid study habits that will improve grades and knowledge, and inspired to envision themselves as future college graduates.

Rationale:

One university can do much to increase the number of urban high school graduates who pursue a post-secondary education. Programs that link universities with urban schools can focus on some of the reasons why students do not enroll in college. Urban school graduates may be poorly prepared for the academic rigors of a college curriculum. Some have never imagined themselves as college students and fail to see the value of a college education. Many students who live in urban settings lack role models who could demonstrate the advantages of having a post-secondary degree. Or, these youth may come from families that are experiencing economic difficulties or that simply do not view college as a viable next step after high school graduation.

By involving students in partnership programs when they reach the middle school years, university personnel can help to curb the self-limiting expectations and poor academic preparation that would likely prevent these young students from envisioning themselves as college graduates and from pursuing a high school curriculum for college-bound students. Awareness of college entrance requirements and enrollment procedures will enable students to plan for their futures. University personnel can help to ensure that every student receives appropriate and timely assistance.

GOAL 4

Successful partnerships can be found in many urban school systems. For example, the Comprehensive Mathematics and Science Program at Columbia University has been serving high school students in New York City for more than 13 years. Students work with high school teachers and college professors to broaden their knowledge in mathematics and science--courses that are needed as college prerequisites. Not only do participating students score higher on state-wide exams than non-participating students, but they are also more likely to graduate from high school. Other universities work with students in different ways. Some universities have established enrichment programs to provide urban youth with cultural opportunities, others obtain significant involvement from parents, and others offer students tutoring assistance in a variety of subjects. Universities must assess their own resources and the needs of the target students in order to determine the focus of the partnership.

Strategy:

4.2 Conduct evaluations of current vocational education and job training programs being implemented in urban schools.

Evaluation of vocational education and job training programs will help to determine the effectiveness and value of individual programs. Components that are particularly successful can be identified and expanded within the program or replicated in other programs. Other aspects that are less effective can be revised or eliminated as necessary.

Rationale:

Schools should be aware of the extent to which any program meets the needs of students. Evaluation of programs that prepare students for the world of work is essential to maintaining high quality approaches. Urban schools in particular are faced with difficulties that are unique to those living in inner-cities or other isolated areas, such as rural districts. Students are less likely to be a part of a network that would facilitate finding a job. Their parents may be unable to help them to secure a position and students may find that transportation limits the availability of a large number of jobs. Thus, inner-city students will rely more heavily on job training programs offered through their schools than would students in other areas.

Appropriate approaches that teach students how to locate job opportunities and to present themselves to potential employers is critical. In addition, students must receive the skills training that will be necessary to carry out their new positions. By ensuring that all objectives are being met, and, more importantly, that all objectives are appropriate, schools can maintain high quality programs that train students for jobs.

Students who work and go to school must be able to satisfy requirements in both places. Academic achievement is no less important to the advancement of these students. At the same time, employers require that students be prepared to fulfill their duties at work. Schools must work with employers to clarify necessary skills and requirements that students need to succeed in the work place. Sound evaluation of vocational education programs will promote student accomplishment in both of these areas. Through such evaluations, schools can improve their job training programs to meet the needs of students and the requirements of local employers.

Strategy:

4.3 Organize voter registration centers at urban high schools and offer opportunities to practice responsible citizenship throughout children's school careers.

Civics teachers, guidance counselors, principals, parents, local community leaders or other individuals can make arrangements for voter registration tables to be set up at urban high schools. In addition, students who are eligible to vote can be brought together at a school-wide assembly or during class to discuss reasons why they can and should vote. Parents also may be invited to attend discussion groups and voter registration opportunities at the school.

Rationale:

Many eligible voters do not register to vote because they don't know how to do it. Some believe they must pass a difficult test or pay a fee in order to register. Others may not register because they do not understand how voting can affect government policy or how it can affect their personal lives. Some eligible voters simply are not interested in participating in this civic right. Schools can help to dispel some of the misconceptions about voter registration and to encourage students to visit the polls during local and national elections.

Parents who become involved in voter registration procedures at the schools will be able to have additional impact on whether students take the initiative to vote. By working at registration booths, speaking to students about voting, or simply by attending discussions and perhaps registering themselves if they have not done so already, parents can show their children how to begin to accept the role as a responsible citizen.

Teachers can take the opportunity during voter registration at the school to talk with students about political systems in general, current events throughout the world, the democratic system, influences the voter can have on shaping public policy, elements of good citizenship, and a host of other topics.

Strategy:

4.4 Create a coalition of schools, community-based organizations, business, industry and institutions of higher learning to provide opportunities for students to work in a variety of roles that serve the community.

A coalition of groups devoted to serving the community can offer a broad base of activities for urban school students who are enlisted to serve. Students could participate in fund-raising efforts for a community shelter or other cause; serve as helpers to the elderly or young; volunteer in hospitals, political campaigns, or other organizations; work in local businesses; or provide any number of services to the community. While older students generally would be appropriate for most positions, young students also could participate by sponsoring events such as bake sales, car washes, neighborhood clean-up drives, or even tutoring other students in their own schools. Urban students at all grade levels can be encouraged to participate in activities that in some way serve the community in which they live.

Rationale:

Frequently, urban students, particularly those who are from economically and culturally disadvantaged neighborhoods, are isolated from mainstream values and behaviors. They may be disenchanted with school or home, and have little idea about what they plan to do in the future. Schools and community-based groups can help to alleviate some of the isolation and sense of drifting that many urban students experience. Students who participate actively through work or volunteering can develop a sense of both belonging to and ownership of their communities. Such feelings can motivate students to take school seriously and to consider the effects of their own behavior on others.

Students are likely to develop a stronger sense of self-esteem and confidence by working with adults who can encourage them and offer praise for their efforts. Many will discover for the first time that they are good at something and that they enjoy the feelings of accomplishment that come with performing a task well. By working in a variety of positions, students may discover that they are inclined toward a particular field -- and may make

career choices based on these early experiences. In turn, career decisions will inspire students to seek a higher education and to apply themselves to their current school assignments.

Linking the schools with a community-based coalition will present a new facet of involvement to urban students who may not be participating in classroom or traditional extra-curricular activities. Such a coalition can create innumerable opportunities for students to succeed.

Strategy:

4.5 Conduct audits of curricula and teaching methods to determine where improvements can be made to cultivate sound critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Urban schools seeking to improve the ability of their students to demonstrate high levels of reasoning, problem solving and critical thinking skills can begin by examining the extent to which these students are currently engaged in these processes. An examination of the curriculum content should reveal areas that require students to use their skills in this way. Instructional methods also can be reviewed to determine ways to test and enhance students' abilities. Each curriculum should have a clear set of objectives that enable the school to evaluate the effectiveness and validity of each objective. Periodic review of the curriculum for each grade level, and of teaching practices, should enable schools to assess the need for change and to highlight areas that are particularly useful and effective for students.

Rationale:

Assessing the school's ability to train students to think critically can provide many benefits to students, schools and communities. Urban students who seek a post-secondary education must be academically prepared to meet the challenge of a college curriculum. This means that students must possess capabilities to solve problems that require abstract reasoning and critical thinking skills. Such skills are developed gradually, usually beginning in the middle grades. Unless urban schools assure that students are taught such skills and build upon them with each year, these students will be unable to compete in a post-secondary classroom or in the work place.

Regular auditing can strengthen a school's goals, objectives, and ability to accomplish its mission. Identification of effective educational components and instructional methods can aid a school in its efforts to weed out less useful efforts and to fortify those that are successful. By assessing the strength of programming efforts, schools will be able to improve students' abilities to engage in higher levels of reasoning, problem solving and critical thinking.

GOAL 5

By the year 2000, urban schools will be adequately staffed with qualified teachers who are culturally and racially sensitive and who reflect the racial characteristics of their students.

Objectives:

- **To increase the percentage of African American, Hispanic American, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, American Indians, and Alaska Native teachers in urban classrooms.**
- **To ensure that urban teachers are adequately trained in the history, culture and learning styles of students in city schools, using curricula that is multicultural and gender fair.**
- **To increase the overall number of urban teachers and the number of special area teachers.**

Strategy:

5.1 School systems should draw talented people from the population they serve. In other words, as a long-term strategy, school districts should invest in "grow your own" teaching candidates.

Rationale:

Starting at the middle or junior high school level, school districts need to develop and maintain activities that promote and encourage talented students to pursue careers in teaching. At the school level, the activities could take the form of clubs and social organizations. Clubs could have a number of teacher sponsors as well as teacher participants to serve as role models and mentors for students. The normal club activities could extend through high school. Such activities could, with private sector or governmental support, culminate with various means of providing financial and academic support to students who enroll in teacher preparation programs and agree to work (for a specified time period) as teachers in their local home school districts upon college graduation.

A spin-off of the student-to-teacher approach as a strategy is the adult worker- to-teacher idea. Within school districts, there are a number of different types of jobs that lend themselves to upward mobility, toward the teaching ranks. A career ladder that starts with the position of teachers's aide, to paraprofessional, to student teacher, and finally to teacher should be considered.

Strategy:

5.2 School districts should require ongoing staff development for teachers that prepares them to teach in a multicultural environment and an awareness of the inherent prejudices that are common in this society.

Rationale:

In most school districts staff development and inservice training is an ongoing activity. However, there are not many school districts that have developed formal course work in the area of multicultural sensitivity and gender issues. Many teachers have experienced the changes in demography within the school districts and have not been assisted in coping with those changes. It is not unlikely that the teachers developed and maintain inaccurate assessments about their students based on race, ethnic origin, and class. These student assessments directly affect their attitudes and actions with regard to teaching. This situation is harmful to both the students and teachers. School districts should require staff development in these critical areas as part of the teacher recertification process.

There are two other aspects of this issue that must be addressed. First, the school district must prepare and adopt curriculum that is relevant to its students. There must be a connection established between what is taught and the students' needs. It is equally as important that teachers know their students and are able to relate the subject matter to them. Teachers must possess cultural and racial sensitivities and be able to display those sensitivities in teaching.

Strategy:

5.3 To increase the number of teachers who are interested in working in urban school districts there must be a variety of incentives developed to attract and keep them.

Rationale:

The primary focus of this strategy is to increase the pool of teacher candidates. Traditionally, the process starts with an identification of college recruits. However, more programs and interest groups need to be established at the high school level and even in middle and junior high schools. Such programs need to capitalize on the value of pairing interested students with teacher mentors. The role of the mentor is to guide and counsel, but most importantly, the mentor provides insight into the profession.

Other approaches to increasing the teacher candidate pool should be focused at on higher education institutions. Colleges need to step up their efforts in recruiting students into the teaching preparation courses of study as well as in helping students to enter into the profession upon graduation. Notably, the historically Black colleges and universities have begun to intensify their efforts in these areas.

Some cities also have recognized the critical need for quality teachers and have passed legislative measures to assist talented high school graduates with college tuition costs if they agree to pursue teaching careers and, upon graduation, are willing to work as teachers in their home cities for a specified number of years. Such incentive programs need to be expanded to other jurisdictions.

The attraction to teaching in urban school districts must include salaries that are competitive, and working conditions that are attractive. The attraction can be perceived in many forms, related to professional responsibilities as opposed to the physical surroundings. School districts can employ some basic tenets related to job satisfaction that would potentially increase the district's drawing and holding power. Examples are providing teachers with the opportunity to be involved in making

decisions that have a direct impact on what happens in the classroom, providing some control over the materials that are used for teaching and learning, and opportunities to grow professionally.

The larger community can play a role in attracting and keeping teachers. For example, school districts in cooperation with local real estate interests could find affordable housing for teachers. The banking and financial institutions could assist teachers in acquiring low interest loans or establishing credit. Other businesses could be persuaded to provide special services for teachers. These forms of incentives provide some financial benefits for teachers, but more importantly they indicate that the community values its teaching corps and places a high priority on quality education.

GOAL 6

By the year 2000, urban schools will be free of drugs and alcohol, students will be well nourished and healthy, and schools will be well-maintained and safe.

Objectives:

- To substantially reduce drug and alcohol use, possession and distribution among urban school students and staff.
- To expand Drug-Free Zones around schools each year.
- To provide adequate nutrition each day and necessary instruction in nutrition education.
- To ensure that urban school students are healthy and in good physical condition.
- To substantially cut teen pregnancy among urban school students.
- To develop in urban school students adequate self-confidence, self-esteem, and personal decision-making skills.
- To provide urban children and staff with school buildings that are in good repair, clean, well-maintained, barrier-free and environmentally safe.
- To ensure that urban students feel safe in school, and learn in a supportive and caring environment.
- To create comprehensive collaboratives that coordinate services to youth and their families through inter-agency cooperation and that eliminate barriers to quality services.

GOAL 6

Strategies:

6.1 Make local schools free of smoking as well as drugs and alcohol for both students and adults.

6.2 Develop school-based programs beyond "Just Say No" which emphasize education and treatment and begin in early childhood.

6.3 Create local inter-agency/community councils with responsibility for developing substance-abuse programs which countervail the "lure of the streets" and the glorification of the drug culture.

Rationale:

Because of the increasingly serious nature of the urban drug epidemic during the past few years, many urban school districts have begun a variety of awareness programs which focus on empowering students to resist negative peer pressure related to drugs and other substance abuse. In retrospect, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of expanding efforts beyond the awareness stage to more intensive education and treatment, even at the early grade levels. A greater emphasis on smoking as the most basic form of substance abuse should also be included.

Unfortunately, many students live and function in social environments where the effects of their exposure to the drug culture exceeds the experiences and training of the teachers and other school staff with whom they come into contact. Indeed, many political and community leaders and substance-abuse experts cite "treating the root causes" of substance-abuse as the only viable form of prevention. Clearly, those persons working within the public schools require the support and assistance of other agencies and community groups to develop successful programs which "treat" the many facets of substance abuse. Likewise, the effectiveness of declaring Drug Free Zones around school buildings will be limited without collaboration among the various governmental agencies.

Strategy:

6.4 Develop local consortiums which bridge the gap between education and health organizations for both health education and the delivery of health services.

Rationale:

Traditionally, schools have been responsible for providing minimal health services such as eye examinations, hearing tests, mild illness and initial emergency care, etc. for students while physical examinations, inoculations, and more complex health-related problems were the responsibility of parents and public/private care-givers. However, urban school districts are now increasingly finding that they must address a multitude of health-related barriers to education. Most urban school districts are required to monitor (and frequently provide) inoculations, physical examinations, and other health-care services for their students. This growing problem cannot be addressed by training educators to provide health services or by expanding the responsibilities of school districts to include health services at a time when many districts are struggling to meet their educational goals. Therefore, the most effective solution is to bring together health organizations with educational institutions to share responsibilities and resources. This strategy is also aligned with other suggested strategies for using schools as centers for the delivery of family services.

Strategy:

6.5 Provide staff development for teachers in health areas and a comprehensive K-12 health curriculum focusing on nutrition, substance abuse, sex education, etc.

Rationale:

At the same time school districts find themselves increasingly responsible for health-care and nutrition service delivery, classroom teachers are finding themselves confronted with health curriculum requirements ranging from the four food groups to crack to AIDS. Teachers must deal with sex education, sexually-transmitted diseases, teen pregnancies and pre-natal care and other sensitive topics for which they often lack adequate training or information. While the previous strategy addresses the health service delivery side of the problem, it is important that school districts accept responsibility for the health education side. Extensive and on-going staff development must be provided not only to assist classroom teachers with understanding and recognizing health-related problems among their students but also to acquire the necessary instructional skills to implement a comprehensive K-12 health curriculum.

Strategy:

6.6 Increase the number of elementary school counselors and train teachers to provide counseling and instruction in the areas of self awareness, self esteem, and values education.

Rationale:

A "poor self image" and "poor self esteem" are frequently cited as root causes for many of the problems facing urban school districts such as high dropout rates, substance abuse, and under-achievement. The variety of strategies which focus on addressing these specific problems usually include a generic reference to "treating the root causes." There have been numerous debates that attribute the moral decay of society to the lack of school prayer and the influence of religion, the breakdown of the nuclear family, the allure of the street, the media, rock music lyrics, inadequate role models, etc. Regardless of the cause, there is common agreement that many urban students lack the adequate values education and self-confidence to overcome the negative influences which confront them. The success of early intervention programs with addressing cognitive problems must be translated to address the affective domain. The emphasis on basic skills and competency-based instruction should be balanced with a comprehensive self-awareness and values education curriculum and more effective guidance counseling services in the elementary schools.

Strategies:

6.7 Solicit federal and state funding to address the backlog of maintenance problems and to increase local school capacities for technology.

6.8 Provide professional amenities such as telephones to classroom teachers to promote increased parental communications and access to social support services.

6.9 Promote architectural competitions for school renovations and for designs for school buildings of the future.

Rationale:

An unfortunate side-effect of shrinking federal, state, and local revenues to urban school districts during the past decade has been a reduction in capital improvement funds for building maintenance, renovation, and new construction. Within the Council's member districts, for example, approximately one-third of all buildings are at least fifty years old with an estimated maintenance backlog which would cost one-fifth of all available revenues. Providing safe and well-maintained learning environments will require that this backlog of maintenance problems be addressed as well as the past practice of short-changing the facilities budget be eliminated. While the focus shifts to leaky roofs, peeling paint, and other serious problems it is important not to overlook other significant improvements such as adequate telephones and other professional amenities for teachers and school staffs. Finally, it is important to begin envisioning and planning the physical structure of the "21st Century Educational Services Complex."

Strategy:

6.10 Increase school safety awareness by developing local safe school plans and organizing a Safe Schools Week.

Rationale:

Many of the strategies identified for this goal require the infusion of increased resources or the collaboration of numerous agencies as part of a long-term solution to achieving the goal by the year 2000. An immediate short-term and no-cost solution can be achieved by organizing individual schools and school districts to adopt safe school plans and sponsoring a Safe Schools Week. This strategy can also be easily implemented in conjunction with other local agencies such as the fire and police departments.

Strategy:

6.11 Encourage special programs, such as schools-within-schools and mentoring, which promote supportive and caring learning environments at all grade levels.

Rationale:

During the past year, the Carnegie and Macy Foundations have each issued reports which discuss the positive influence of nurturing environments and significant others on the achievement of adolescents and minority high school students. In the Carnegie study, adolescent students who were contained in small structured groups within larger middle schools and were taught by teams of teachers who developed personal relationships with the students experienced increased achievement as well as a more positive school experience. In the Macy study, groups of minority students, who were enrolled in Macy-sponsored health profession college preparatory programs throughout the country, identified the influence of caring adults as one of the strongest factors leading to their academic successes. Both of these studies indicated our schools need to recognize the critical importance of young adults having a "significant other(s)" to establish high expectations for them and to nurture them towards attaining those expectations.

Strategies:

6.12 Re-define school buildings as one-stop centers for family support services, employment training, and other support services.

6.13 In each local jurisdiction, convene a task force of government agencies and public/private service organizations, headed by the mayor or designee, to promote a collaborative effort to address health, safety, and service delivery issues.

Rationale:

Of all the discussions, findings, and proposed strategies which emerged as a result of national organization input related to this goal, the strongest and most frequent messages which surfaced were the endorsement of schools as service referral/delivery centers and the importance of collaboration among the various types of public and private organizations to maximize resources and improve effectiveness. The difficulties which public school personnel face related to the non-instructional needs of students and their families and the lack of necessary skills and resources to address these barriers to learning require new alternatives and new perspectives to current public school models which have been in existence throughout this century.

In many urban neighborhoods, the local school building can serve as an "oasis" for the community beyond the limits of the normal school day and its current educational mission. By operating school buildings "around the clock" and providing other community services besides those related directly to instruction, local governments can provide better services at more reasonable costs. Furthermore, investments for technology and other higher cost educational programs are better justified when shared between K-12 programs during the regular school day and community and/or career preparation programs at night. Schools which remain open can also provide homework centers, library services, tutoring, and other opportunities for students.

GOAL 6

An important component of this new service delivery approach is the development of a formal structure for collaboration among the various public and private community service agencies. These collaborative efforts must include extensive study, discussion, and both short- and long-term plans for implementation.

NEXT STEPS

As noted earlier, this document is a basic starting point, a collection of ideas emerging from a variety of concerns interested in establishing and working through a national urban education agenda. Among the the Council's next steps are the following:

1. The Council task force and the participating organizations will further refine the strategies for achieving the goals by working with representatives from each of the Council's member school districts at the annual conference in November 1990. Urban educators from across the country will react to the strategies and offer examples of programs and practices related to the six goal areas which are proving successful. These examples, revisions and amendments will be incorporated into a final document.

2. The Council will hold a major national conference the Urban Education Summit in January 1991. Representatives from urban school districts, national education organizations, philanthropic groups and the private sector will convene not only for a series of workshops and presentations on critical issues related to the six national goals, but also to endorse a document of agreement, forging a formal commitment to collaborate on strategies to attain the stated goals.

3. Following the summit, the Council, in concert with its collaborating organizations will develop a multi-year plan for implementing strategies to accomplish the national goals. This plan will include a number of activities to sustain the momentum of the Council's broad-based coalition of concerns. For example, the Council will initiate a number of research and public information activities as well as monitor national progress toward the goals. Some of the functions currently under consideration are: an information clearinghouse on urban education issues; an electronic database of quantifiable information on urban school districts; a researchers' network to establish ties and working relationships with research organizations and higher education institutions to monitor, promote, and in some instances, help sponsor research related to urban and minority student education; development of a national research agenda to pinpoint areas related to urban education in need of study or further exploration; systematic monitoring of progress toward the national goals; and increased federal, state and local monitoring -- and reporting -- of legislation affecting urban schools.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

The following organizations were represented at the work sessions with The Council of the Great City Schools' National Urban Education Task Force.

American Association for Higher Education
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Community and Junior Colleges
American Association of School Administrators
American Association of School Personnel Administrators
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Women
American Educational Research Association
American Federation of Teachers
American School Counselor Association
ASPIRA Association, Inc.
Association for the Advancement of International Education
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Association of School Business Officials International
Business Roundtable
Center for Women's Policy Studies
The Children's Defense Fund
The College Board
Committee for Economic Development
Council for Basic Education
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Chief State School Officers
Council of Educational Facility Planners International
Cuban American National Council, Inc.
Education Commission of the States
Educational Testing Service
William T. Grant Foundation
Home and School Institute
Institute for Athletics and Education
Institute for Educational Leadership
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
March of Dimes
National Alliance of Black School Educators
National Alliance of Business
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Association of College Admission Counselors

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Pupil Services Administrators
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
National Center on Education and the Economy
National Committee for Citizens in Education
National Community Education Association
National Conference of State Legislatures
National Council for the Social Studies
National Council of Christians and Jews, Inc.
National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations
National Council of La Raza
National Council of Negro Women
National Council of Teachers of English
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Dropout Prevention Center
National Education Association
National Federation of State High School Associations
National Governors Association
National League of Cities
National PTA
National School Boards Association
National School Public Relations Association
National School Safety Center
National Urban Alliance for Effective Education
National Urban Coalition
National Urban League
People for the American Way
Quality Education for Minorities Network
United Way of America
U.S. Conference of Mayors